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TRUTH-GLEAMS.

BY

J. O'B. LOWRY, D.D.

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THIS

WORK IS DEDICATED

TO

THE WRITER'S FAMILY,

AND TO

THE CHURCHES

WHICH HE HAS SERVED AS PASTOR.

PREFACE.

THE suggestions of friends have exerted an important influence in connection with the decision to publish this book. The undertaking itself has been facilitated by the kindness of several publishers of leading periodicals to whose columns the author contributed a number of articles.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE mystery of the ages is life, not death. The last is only a phase of the first. The mariner, looking out for the first time over the great, restless ocean, sees its billows rolling angrily and its waves breaking over the rocks, and says, I will harness the grim monster and ride to the unexhausted country which lies beyond the sea. That is the believer's attitude, all the more rational because he has tidings in advance. The man of the world views death as a part of his liabilities; the Christian views it as a part of his assets. Having Christ, he has "all things, life and death."

The philosophy of life has long fascinated the writer, especially as that philoso-

phy is interpreted by Christ's inimitable monograph on biology: The Vine and the "Cuttings." To stop short of the principles there laid down would be unscientific, to go beyond them would be unwise.

It has been said that the terms which Christian truth will employ in the future will be biological. Is it not quite the same thing to say that they will be biblical? They may not be technical, just as the Gospel's philosophy of life is not metaphysical; but they will be biological in the biblical sense.

Calvin and Arminius seem to have looked at opposite sides of life's mountain. Why not make all due acknowledgment, and claim the right to botanize and biologize for ourselves on both sides? This means not less systematic theology, but more of biblical exegesis. We shall then be enlightened by the royal lilies empurpling the fields, the sparrows making their nest in the trees; the prodigal stopped in his thrilling self-accusation by the father's

embrace, and the vine sending life into responsive cuttings, which are "pruned" for greater fruit-bearing; and refusing life to the unresponsive, which are "pruned away" utterly, because valueless.

With Life beckoning with queenly hand, there is little time for polemical judgments; for heresy-holding or heresy-hunting. Children roaming over the hills may not be in the beaten highway; and yet they may be in sight of the father's house; and, what is better, they may be instinct with the life which the father sends pulsating through their veins.

It will be abundant recompense to have it said that the voice of the writer is a child's voice.

J. O'B. L.

CONTROLLING INFLUENCES IN LIFE.

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CONTROLLING INFLUENCES IN LIFE.

WHAT a child derives from its parents at its birth is of more consequence than what it receives at its majority. Second in importance only to being born again is being "born right the first time."

The genial Autocrat of the breakfast table maintains that the time to begin the education of a child is a hundred years before its birth. It may be easy to make too much of heredity; but it is also easy to make too little of it. What our grandparents were is of grave moment to us all. It may matter little whether or not they were ever in prison; but it matters greatly whether or not they ever deserved to be there.

The genius of the day finds that everything is created with its tendency inborn. The very worm has its wings folded about it before it becomes the butterfly. The

child of a year has in it much that will determine what it will be at twenty. The generation, therefore, which rectifies itself, or becomes rectified, gives to coming generations a better prospect of true living.

Does some one say, If heredity be so real, why need I go against the current? The answer is very practical. The man with an inborn tendency to drink is expected to do all in his power to overcome it. For him that is of the essence of civilization. Sin is a tendency, like the drink tendency. It is more, undoubtedly; but it is that. It is to be displaced. How? By letting Christ in.

Kentucky's most brilliant orator, Clay excepted, when delivering a temperance address, is reported to have said: "Let us have the pledge. Let us have no religion about this. Keep religion out. Secularize the movement." Alas, keeping religion out let the tempest in, as the brilliant speaker found out to his own cost,—and ruin. So with all sin. It must suffer dis-

placement by the entrance of life from Christ crucified. The individual and the race need new life. They are degenerate. The Christ life is the basis of their life. The parable of the vine fairly throbs with vitality. The engrafted life fascinates the husbandman who buds it on. It would be interesting to watch the southern Californian grafting the lemon on the orange-tree, even if the lemon does retain its acidity. How much more interesting to note the change which the believer undergoes, when grafted on the "true vine." A sweetness is passed into the very juices of his life.

What the soul *is* ranks first; but closely akin in importance is what the soul has. From tangential Schopenhauer up all agree in this. The study of environment has become one of the great studies of the day: How to adjust ourselves to our surroundings? Some define ideal living as consisting in the perfect harmony between the soul and its environment. Others

qualify this. All admit its force, in one form or another. A fact to be emphasized is this: There are inner qualities, susceptible of development, which are capable of exercising a royal influence over our environment; among them stands:

Conscience. It should not be simply taken for granted that we are to live conscientiously. What is merely taken for granted is too much like water, too little like steam,—force *in posse*, not force *in esse*. No life will amount to much where there is little or no moral conviction. Even Bismarck felt that if there is no hereafter, all is vanity, even imperial policies. The sum of Carlyle's gospel was, "Man do thy duty silently and prate not of happiness." Good advice, notwithstanding the legion of volumes in which the sage broke his own silence.

The place of conscience in life is easily recognized. The difficulty is in crystallizing it into conduct. Webster asserted that the matter of supreme importance to

himself was his relation to his God. But in his career he practically nullified the force of this conviction.

Conscience is sometimes called "Common sense, and nothing more;" and against the moral view is cited the case of the brigand who coolly slays his captive, and refuses to eat meat on Friday. But the definition, like the scant garment, does not touch the feet. Sanctified common sense comes nearer being conscience. But fortunately some who do not possess a large fund of any kind of sense do possess conscience, at least to the point of abhorring that which is evil and cleaving to that which is good. Distinguishing between the two may be difficult with these last. Hence the fund of common sense may enter as one of the tests of ethical health.

The roots of conscience lie in

Unselfishness,—the only element in which the right remains uninfected and correct motives have free play.

The heart of the best theory may be cut

out of it by such a maxim as, Business is business. Is it true? Helpfulness comes nearer being the business of life,—to help mankind and, reverently, if need be, the Lord against the mighty. To help men and women out of the waters, in which they are struggling; out of the mire, in which they are sinking, to the Rock and to the Heights,—that is of the essence of true living. But we make a side issue of this work to which we are called by the voice of God, the constitution of our nature, the cry of humanity, and the storms of revolution.

Courage is of vast moment. Who is satisfied with himself? We are told that character must regenerate the world. A glance at others and a glance at self lead one to doubt this.

As fast as one problem of sin is solved another lifts its head. The Spirit alone can regenerate the race. A Moses may legislate, an Elijah may interpret; an Isaiah may lighten, a Paul or Luther may

thunder; a Nightingale may work her fingers to the bone, but Christ crucified alone can save men. On this line the loftiest courage is possible in our life-work. On this line hope comes back to the weary soul, courage to the fainting heart; for we can say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The power to endure is vastly better than *finesse.* Courage is better than cunning. It would be a frightful comment, if true, that "barbarism produced wolves, but civilization produces foxes." Fortunately we may refuse either horn of the dilemma and "be men." The effort to do this is one to which the divine Word, the divine Spirit, and all the forces of heaven lend themselves; wherefore the undertaking is by no means a "lost art," but the most vital of all arts, as it is the most practical of all sciences.

SELF-TRAINING.

SELF-TRAINING.

A WELL-RIPENED character is the best product of the four seasons. It is fortunate that Nature does not deny to the poorest soil the right to produce "school-houses, churches, *men*." And where the difficulties are greatest we frequently find the product best. The benign climate of the Pacific gives us the largest growths; but it is in the bleaker regions of the Atlantic that we find fruits with the finest flavor. There is a law of compensation; and under Providence it rests largely with every man and every woman to determine the measure of self-development to which each shall attain.

Self-culture was not superseded by inspiration. Paul wanted his books and parchments forwarded which he had left behind. Inspiration is the utmost heightening of

the intellectual perception in special directions. Scriptural inspiration is the utmost heightening of the intellectual perception for spiritual ends. Peter was inspired when he fraternized with Gentiles at Antioch; but not when he practised dissimulation about it on Paul's arrival. Eternal vigilance is the price of all true virtue.

Though perfect, because divine, Christ was evidently a close student of the Pentateuch, and even in the active years of his early ministry he was "wont" to frequent the synagogue. He knew men. He knew Nature, from whom he gleaned so many figures to be used in illustrating the truths which he came to utter.

By some it is held that man is neither an angel nor a demon. Others see in him both a demon of darkness and an angel of light. Emerson says, bitingly: "Every man is a divinity in disguise; a god playing the fool. It seems as if heaven had sent its insane angels into our world as to an asylum. They utter at intervals words

they have heard in heaven; then the mad fit returns and they mope and wallow like dogs." Rather emphatic; and yet there is truth enough in the statement to lead every one to ask, Which shall have the ascendancy,—angel or demon? By all means chain the latter and let loose the angel.

Watch the complex character as it drifts, decides, and acts. Drifting is facilitated by the adoption of false ideals. A certain romance touches the depths of fatalism when it affirms that "nothing matters." When the question was raised, Is life worth living? a doubt was started whose growth and influence have been aided by many morbid writers; with whom the Anatomy of Melancholy seems to be the master study. Analysis means dissection, not construction. Tyndall, we are told, when standing on an Alpine summit, was asked, "Do you not feel, here, that there is a God?" He replied, "I feel it, till you bid me prove it."

It is just possible that the more logical we pride ourselves on becoming the less we may know. The Agnostic is not scientific when he "gets angry with us for believing his word," when he affirms that he knows nothing. One is reminded of the express-messenger and the little dog confided to his care. At the end of the journey the question was asked, "Where is the dog going?" The agent replied, "I dun' no, he dun' no, nobody dun' no; he's chewed up his tag." It is unutterably sad to see a man who throws away his only guide to an immortal destiny, and makes his blindness a ground of boasting.

Ignorance of biblical truth is a fruitful cause of mistake-making. It is the echo of truth, rather than the truth itself, with which the average man is acquainted. When the thing itself is unknown, he is familiar with its designation. A friend was once quizzing a talkative M.D.; said he, "Doctor, what is your opinion of Materia Medica?" The answer was a rev-

elation, "I am not prepared to give an opinion, though I have seen the disease." A close perusal of the Word itself is the first step in the soul's emancipation from darkness; yet thousands criticise who do not read its pages.

Extreme tendencies towards sharp analysis produce equally sharp reactions. The weary brain turns from the midnight oil to the foot-lights and tinsel. Farce lies very close to philosophy; and grave unwisdom should not be overmuch surprised at the modern Hep, Hurrah. A false worship of the pseudo-practical is another manifest danger. The man of the world forgets that gold-dust is only dust after all.

Impressed by the law of reaction and its manifold illustration, a wise observer predicts that the next sweep of the pendulum will be towards the stricter orthodoxy,—the hereditary foe of materialism in all its forms.

Decision is a less pathetic study than drifting, but it is a more inspiring one.

Do the eyes turn backwards, towards the past? Is the face towards the future? We watch with bated breath as the man passes from decision to action, seeking his ideals in the book of books.

The pride of intellect has operated against assigning to biography its rightful place. The Bible stands alone; as for the rest, biography is the crown of human literature. It is almost impossible to read Stanley's "Life of Arnold" without feeling that one has "been to college" in the act. Not material science, which sometimes mistakenly arrogates to itself a monopoly of the term, and leads men to study the soul as if it were, in kind, like the chemical gases,—not material science but human life should be more earnestly emphasized in the curriculum of our schools. It is well to be an expert with the crucible; it is better to know and imitate a great soul. The Ava chapter in Judson's life is ablaze with heroic lightning. It is not a loss of time to follow Jonathan Edwards, as he

shakes his mane and roars like a lion; notwithstanding the narrow cage in which his last biographer confines him. This most intense of all American spirits is still waiting for a kindred genius, who will not dissect him like a dead lion, but follow his great soul as it strides upward, pausing at last upon the heights.

Looking forward makes men of action. This transformed the monk Martin into the Luther of the Reformation. Heroes keep their gaze fixed upon the goal. The Christian victor runs "with patient endurance" the race set before him, "looking [away from all else] unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith:" "on the cross, the emblem of faith's power; on the throne, the emblem of faith's result."

THE LIFE THAT NOW IS.

THE LIFE THAT NOW IS.

THE spirit of our age demands of everything, sacred and profane, that it shall pay. Whether the motive be high or not, the test is applied, the gauntlet is thrown down; and the Christian need not fear the issue. Godliness pays. We speak it reverently. It has promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. The life that now is constitutes the interest which it pays; the life to come, the principal.

Extreme Christians make too little of the life that now is. It is true that the Scriptures teach us to set our affection on things above; but that should not lead us to treat life as a worthless thing. Virtue is a good thing on earth as well as in heaven. Love and goodness are beautiful here as well as there. The celestial spirit sanctifies times and places.

Another class to which we are indebted for distorted views of life consists of those who are perpetually asking, Is not life a failure? The very question breeds doubt. If we were always to be burdened with such philosophies, life would scarcely be worth living. A third class—reckless, despairing—murmur, "Life is a poor farce, let us have done with it,"—and the pistol is put to the temple. But life is a beautiful thing, a holy thing, if we will have it so. Yesterday God thought, and the golden cloud gathered on the western sky. Did you stop to behold it and enjoy it? God thought, and the forest flamed with autumnal red. Did you stop to enjoy that? From the flaxen-haired child, playing at your feet, the light of love streams forth to fill your whole soul. Did you thank God for it? The wife of your bosom poured her whole being into the cup of your life. Did you thank God as you drank it? Godliness pays her subjects with life's sacred blessings—now. Some-

times in dealing with men you suffer losses. Your assets fail. Bad debts and bad debtors have to be nursed. Was there ever a man who lost anything by being godly? There is a delicious recompense in doing right. We are warned against the maxim, Honesty is the best policy. Honesty is a good principle, in growing rich towards God, whether it multiplies farthings or not. The writer listened to a deacon with great interest as he related the following incident: A customer came into his store and asked for a pound of coffee. While weighing it out, occasion was taken to speak of treasures in heaven. The stranger took the coffee into an adjoining store, and said, "Please weigh that over again; the man who sold it talked so much about religion I was led to doubt his scales." Said the deacon, "Thank God, it weighed an ounce over the pound." Christian rectitude pays. So with all the virtues which enter into godliness. It will prove quite as good a shield to men as to

women. In the Missouri penitentiary there are seventeen hundred and fifty male convicts; there are just thirty-three female. The fact that the men battled in the out-door world does not explain the mighty difference. Susceptibility to Christian influence and control must figure in any true solution.

But look at the principal,—the life that is to come. Sometimes you get very tired. No spot on earth seems so dear as that little space four by eight, where your loved one is lying, under the sod. You long for rest. The larger life allures you. Recently a friend drew near to death's door. Said he to a brother, "There are three things which I wish to tell you. To one situated as I was, earthly things grew small. The dying couch struck me as a poor place in which to get ready for the journey. Lastly, while I had no visions and experienced no ecstasies, I was brought to *know God* as I never knew him before." If such rays of light slant across the vestibule, what must the glory of the temple be?

Eye hath not seen, with all its discerning power; ear hath not heard, amid all its treasured notes; neither hath the heart of man conceived, with all its visions of bliss, what God, on earth as well as in heaven, hath prepared for those who love him.

THE INFLUENCE OF LIFE UPON LIFE.

THE INFLUENCE OF LIFE UPON LIFE.

In emphasizing the sacrificial work of Christ, we should not ignore the moral force of character working on character, life on life,—of divine manhood working on human manhood, affecting character, life, and destiny. In short, we should seek to discern distinctly the Christly principle, poise, and power which the gospel faithfully commends.

In reference to Christly principle, it is quite true we are indebted to his grace for all that we secure or display; but something more is meant than the apparent transformation which colored glass effects, when used to view bleak and unattractive objects. Something more is meant than the apparent transformation which a veil effects when one is used to ornament an unattractive face. If we are in Christ and

Christ is in us, our convictions will partake of the nature of his convictions; our emotions will resemble his emotions; our principles will be like his principles, and our energies will conform to his energies, —so vitally are we influenced by Jesus Christ.

We apply a twofold test to life with its duties and activities: first, how are these related to the essential fatherhood of God? then, how are they related to the inexorable brotherhood of men? Proximity to Jesus may at any moment be determined by the strength, or weakness, of our convictions and actions in these two directions. We may so break away from these two principles as to lose ourselves hopelessly in a guilty distance from Christ; we may have a sense of their power, so quick and keen, as to feel that our lives are hid with Christ in God. Christ becomes literally our head. We become, literally, members of a spiritual body; the life of every part affecting ourselves, but our own

life being drawn supremely from Christ, just as the tendril gathers its life from the parent vine. It is thus that our character is made to partake of the very character of Jesus, and our controlling principles to resemble the very principles of Jesus.

Christly poise grows naturally out of Christly principles. A great deal depends on moral poise, or spiritual balance. Obliquity obtains when that is wanting. Men may mean well, but there will be a lack of gravitation towards the good. A review of Seneca's life would illustrate the point. He uttered many noble sentiments; so noble that sceptics ask, "Did Seneca borrow from Paul, or did Paul borrow from Seneca?" But history does not assert any efficient effort on Seneca's part to be Paul-like in action and life, or any effort on Paul's part to be Seneca-like in deportment. Lord Bacon's intellectual greatness was rivalled by his moral weakness.

Any community would suffice if we

needed local illustration of the point before us. How often the papers present to us young men, well reared, so far as we know, well-meaning, but in a moment of temptation they are thrown off balance, and we read of deaths sadder than those of the coffin and the grave.

Firm spiritual poise is a part of completeness in Christ. There is the old story of John Wesley. Some one said to him, "Suppose you knew that you were going to die next Sunday night, what would you do?" "Well, I should preach in the morning as usual, then meet my afternoon appointment as usual, preach at night, and go home, go to sleep, and wake up in glory."

Is it any wonder that trials fail to affect such characters? Is it any wonder that Paul's strength grew with every test which his enemies applied? Is it any wonder that, like the veteran resting on his sword, he could look over the victorious field of battle and declare, "I have striven the

good strife, I have completed my course, I have kept the faith; as for the rest there is laid up for me the crown of life which God the righteous Judge shall give me at that day."

Christly power results from Christly principle and poise. The first is invincible, the second convinces us of its invincibility. Momentum and philosophy are perfectly compatible. True to those principles which Christ represents (briefly true to Christ), the soul may sweep along its wondrous orbit and add to the glory of God's spiritual constellations. How grandly Paul's spirit soared and glistened! What a circle of glory marked the magnificent revolution of that later Paul,—Martin Luther!

We should study to be like these great spirits, as they were like Christ.

Then let us study the motives of Christ. Our beginnings may be modest. Some of the best scholars of the world have been poor, illiterate lads, with only a torch or

candle to light the way along which they should one day walk. The humblest are they who excel in the study of the great motives which underlay the ideal life and character of the Son of man. We can discover these motives in the living Christian virtues which grace our age. We see them more plainly, yet not more humanly, presented in the Gospel; which is as vital as when it was first given, and those who devoutly listen may hear the Spirit speak in a thousand ways, reaffirming the principles which controlled the life and shaped the influence of Jesus.

Inbreathe the spirit of Christ. What earthly ardor is to human life, all that and more is heavenly ardor to the life of the soul. Deriving your life from Christ, gravitating constantly towards him, and inspired by his spirit, you may hope to be complete in him. If we fulfil our mission, God will fulfil for us our destiny. This side of life and that are really only two views of the one great life. If we are

true to this, God will be divinely true to that.

Far up among the mountains the little stream takes its source. You can step across it at the fountain. Lower down among the valleys it absorbs other streams little like itself. You can ford it at that second stage. On it sweeps, growing as it flows. It becomes at length a river, bearing on its bosom laden crafts that ply between great cities. Later still, the mighty waters blend with the mightier gulf, and the gulf blends with the grand old ocean. Such, and so related, are the stages of our growth in the Christly life. We must seek completeness at every stage, for that specific stage; if we dare to hope for that absolute completeness which shall crown our future life.

MORAL ARCHITECTURE: THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE.

MORAL ARCHITECTURE: THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE.

All creatures are builders,—material, intellectual, or moral. Man has been called a trading animal. He is also a constructor; building villages on lakes and plains. Kings found cities to perpetuate their rule and name, and empires are built as memorials of human greatness. A Disraeli, with his wand, fixed the limits of the airy, floating kingdom in which he lived; a Bismarck, with sterner grasp, wrought with iron-like material, and Gladstone is to-day toiling honestly but feebly to build more wisely than they all.

Schools of thought attest man's building tendency and power. Lands in which specialties prevail are rich in illustration of this fact. Bacon, in England, laid the broad foundation on which practical Eng-

lish philosophy has been in process of development for centuries. Newton, purer, if not greater, wrought with kindred genius. In Germany, Leibnitz and Kant, in chosen fields, put forth their power; and Goethe established a school of poetry and philosophy which Germans "will not willingly let die." Grandest of all, Shakespeare, the great apostle of common sense, built for the English-speaking ages,—for the world.

Nobler, however, than all these builders is he who conscientiously seeks to lay the grander foundation of moral character. We should not forget that intellectual building alone will not suffice. The gifted Bacon, with some degree of right, earned the title "greatest and meanest of mankind." Character-building could never rest satisfied with that. The perfecting of nature in holiness—"wholeness"—is its aim and limit. This is the Christian's life-work, "Perfecting holiness in the fear of God." The qualifications affecting this

work are practical and positive. The first is a quick perception of the wrong, of evil. Possibly no man will ever be lost—or saved—because of his theory of the origin of evil. Difficulties without limit invest that question. Quietly resting in Coblentz, on the Rhine, following out the teachings of a sermon delivered by a Reformed Pfarrer, our mind drifted towards the belief that evil meant simply the withdrawal of the good, of God therefore; as darkness means the absence of light. But no theory survived more extended thought, nor, indeed, has any man solved the problem. Hence we say no one will be saved or lost because of his view of the origin of evil. But what about his voluntary relation to evil? One's view of the practical workings of sin are inconceivably important. We must have a quick perception of the wrong; sincere regret must follow. This is more valuable as a sign than as a cause of reformation.

The lingering remnants of pure princi-

ples show that life exists. Pain is an indicator of vitality; regret resembles pain in many features. Religious sensibility, conviction, life, are all interwoven. Let no thread be ruthlessly broken. The message of regret should be obeyed. Uncompromising resistance should follow in the proper time. It is not enough to regret,—simple regret may enfeeble. Whately believed that even good emotions, continually excited "without corresponding action," were enfeebling. Sighing and weeping have their place; but the arm to be strengthened must wield the weapon of defence and resistance. No armistice should be allowed; Satan and sin resisted in the fear of God, are Satan and sin put to flight; and that flight means victory and manly liberty.

Speaking more positively, a quick perception of the right is an important factor in the building of character. The Spirit plants the germ; but once implanted, it may be cultivated to a marked degree.

Mental philosophies tell us of a gather-

ing of connoisseurs sampling wine from a noted cellar. One remarked, "I detect something that tastes like iron." Another said, "I detect something that tastes like leather." Descending to the cellar, and examining the receptacle, they found in it a key with a leather thong! Exaggerated? Possibly; but it enforces the importance of cultivating the moral sense, which surpasses physical taste in its delicacy and strength. Concentration of mind and habit will go very far towards success.

Sincere longing is not less important. The heart must be enlisted; the affections interested. Conviction is not enough. A sense of duty will not suffice. Principle is vastly important, but "liking," love, works more promptly and more efficiently. Great reforms are sometimes acted out before they are reasoned out. Whether wise or unwise, these revolutions are the children of enthusiasm. Whatever we think about the past, the little State of Kansas plunged with glowing passion into our great revolu-

tion and, right or wrong, she won; and more recently she has plunged into another, and sēems likely to win again, destined, seemingly, to thrust before the American people the problem of prohibition. Missouri and the land may have to confront it sooner than we think. Be the revolution a wise one or an unwise one, the principle stands,—viz., that impulses are mightier than principles in solving the problem of humanity. Luther did not know that he was destined to forsake his mother church. He had not measured the logic of his first position. Even Paul confesses that love is greater than hope, which has to do with the future, and greater than faith, which has to do with creeds and the embodiment of principles. Earnest seeking will issue out of earnest longing. By meditation, the study of God's word, and personal exhibition of holy lives it will manifest itself. By prayer, deep, David-like, the soul is aided. Andrew Fuller, the great English Baptist,

filled his diary with confessions of sinfulness and cryings out after God,—like the hunted and famished hart beside the water brook. Healthful surroundings, like healthful mountain air, are needed. Exercise in gospel enterprise and effort will act like exercise on the physical system, invigorating the whole man. A noble religious hero once said that the Christian was "ein Werden, nicht ein Geworden sein,"—ever growing, never grown. Paul, counting himself to have not yet apprehended, determined to do this one thing,—"to press towards the mark" (or according to the mark) "for the prize." Such should be our aim to-day.

If we cherish piously the growing plant, the first budding will appear in due season, to be followed by the perfect blossoming of aims and principles and powers. The life-spirit of the Christian is described in the words, "In the fear of God." With that we are to begin the work, and with it to carry it forward and complete it. Loving

reverence, a recognition of divine authority, lies at the foundation of every great and lasting work. The authority of superiority precedes, or at least keeps pace with, love in the training of a child; and all men are children of varying growth. Deeper and deeper, tenderer and tenderer, should be our estimate of God's authority and guidance. In such spirit let us seek to complete, perfect the work. The perfection of holiness will be found to embrace the full-bringing of every grace. Faith, hope, and love will assuredly not be wanting; but will crown the final triumph.

According to one's ideal or standard will be his attainment in the building of character. Strive to be perfect; not as angel or archangel, but "even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect."

MORAL ARCHITECTURE: THE PARTICULAR ELEMENTS.

MORAL ARCHITECTURE: THE PARTICULAR ELEMENTS.

A RELIGIOUS editorial in an enterprising daily presented, some time ago, "A Problem for the Clergy." The developed unbelief, no longer latent but manifest, that displays itself in so many ways, was suggestively pictured as robbing our churches of men and leaving them to be filled by women and their ministers. Quite forcibly the statement was made that this state of things was not to be changed by periodical denunciations from the pulpit. To what, then, should we look for a remedy?

We would not ignore, for one moment, the place and power of the Holy Spirit, from whom must come the potent influence by which the tendency of our age is to be met and mastered. But through what agencies? Practical unbelief must

be met by practical illustrations of Christian manhood and womanhood,—by characters in which the power of faith lives, and through which the light of faith shines daily. When doubt pervades the business world or the social world, it is *character* that interposes to reinstate dethroned confidence. So it is in the moral and spiritual world. Men do not, will not read the Bible, but they scan the lives of professing Christians, and, failing to see the evidence of anything sublime, ideal, or spiritual, they make haste to deny the existence of a divine source, whence comes the inspiration and enthusiasm of the real believer. Sanctified Christian manhood and womanhood, resting upon a great, grand faith in God, will solve the problem of unbelief's dark day. Faith is the foundation upon which Piety rears her temple; it is the soil out of which godliness springs and grows; it is the school, the atmosphere, the element in which all spiritual growth is attained.

For believers as well as unbelievers faith solves many problems by looking beyond present clouds and tempests. A friend once journeyed beside the sea of Galilee when a storm-cloud swept over it. Pitching his tent he waited for the rain, which soon came down in torrents. The wind threatened the overthrow of the tent, and caused him to look forth again and again. Far away in the distance the lightning flashed upon Mount Hermon, clad in perpetual snow, serene and undisturbed by the storm about the sea. Was it not natural that the thought should flash upon him?—How true to the life of Christians! we may be overwhelmed by storm and tempest, but our faith has only to look through the vivid darkness to see the heavenly Hermon, serene and calm and beautiful. Those who gain these heavenly visions are proofs incarnate of faith's power.

In faith add virtue. By minds spiritually occupied, without exception, virtue will be secured. The camellia cannot tell

you why it is pure; the violet cannot tell why it is fragrant. These are characteristics of the choicest flowers. Characters may attain to similar purity and beauty, if only the planting and the maturing of the Divine hand be sought. But the martial element predominates in the Latin conception of the word "virtue" as Wm. R. Williams was quick to see. In the Greek it is the superlative of "the good," "best-ness," if we make a word. Evidently the heroic element should not be excluded. In this practical day, when dollars and cents are universal standards, it is well to emphasize that which is ideal, heroic. Let us admire this in others, even if we do not realize it in our own struggling lives. Thence comes that spirit of unselfishness which renders self-immolation, altruism, possible. Spiritual heroism is its highest form, celestial ardor, which enables the wounded soldier, dying while the wound is being probed, to exclaim, "A little deeper, probe a little deeper, doctor, and

you will find—the emperor!" not of France, but of a kingdom more immortal still.

In virtue add knowledge. In an age of light and learning, it is criminal to be voluntarily ignorant; and yet when we know all that science has said, how inadequate our knowledge! True, lessons drawn from rocks and mines and plants, have their value, but they can never satisfy the soul. A higher knowledge is needed of the soul itself, of its God, the future Intelligence is very near to divinity; but the fact makes necessary the apostolic injunction:

In knowledge add temperance, or "balance." Lucifer, prince of the morning, was exalted to heaven in knowledge, but cast down to hell, because of his intemperate ambition and arrogance. Knowledge may ripen into wisdom, but it often deteriorates into pride. It is a singular fact that young converts stand in great danger just here. The thrill of the new-

born joy which pervades mind and heart, when Jesus first becomes known, is electrifying, and to the electrified, spiritual pride is possible. Learn to know all that God and conscience and the Spirit may impart, but let humility temper thy knowledge into wisdom, that self-mastery may be retained.

What shall we say of those who are not even converts? The exalted scientist who vaults into the theories of arrogance or presumption and reads the Deity out of the universe is a stranger to temperance or self-mastery. All honor to science. What God has written on the rocks is just as true as what stands written in the gospel. But the man who walks the giddy heights of science needs to bow before the author of a world so grand. Of the neophyte nothing need be said. Among the practically intemperate stand the reckless leaders of the world of fashion. Women, destined to be princesses unto the good and the beautiful, sometimes forget their

altar and shrine in the feverish struggles and rivalries of "style." To women the world is looking, God is looking for the gentle leaven which shall leaven all mankind.

Of the gourmand and the drunkard, twin brothers in shame, much need be said. For the drunkard, it is true, the world entertains a romantic sympathy. He is usually generous to a fault and clever. But for shame, that the man himself will so far forget himself and make all that is celestial within him simply bestial,

"Sowing the seeds of eternal shame,"

despite the call to immortality.

In true temperance add patience. "The cross is heavy. . . .

Father, take my hand,
And, reaching down,
Lead to the crown
Thy child!"

And remember that angelic patience means more than resignation. In essence

it is patient endurance; blending the hardihood of the veteran with the trustful obedience of the child.

In patience add Godliness. The word Godliness signifies Godlikeness; but that is too strong for the present term. That would include every virtue, instead of being a specific virtue itself. Then, too, the word here is "devoutness," or piety,—fragrant above incense to God and to man.

In devout piety add brotherly kindness. These virtues evidently work towards an appropriate outward expression. The man who fails to maintain an attitude of kindness to his fellow-creatures will not be trusted in his relations to his great Creator, for unfaithfulness to the seen is infidelity to the unseen.

Man's brotherhood is the second of the two cardinal principles in Christ's philosophy and kingdom. The fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, are forever associated, with all the warrant of fact and

law and gospel. Treasure brotherly kindness, for piety is barren without it.

In brotherly kindness add love,—a principle as well as a sentiment. This is the soundest and greatest of all virtues, and fosters all the rest. It was and is the supreme motive-power in the bosom of the father, whose pulsings are his children's life. Love throbs in the great creative acts, the tender providences, the grace of God. Inbreathe that, O mortal, if thou wouldst be immortal. Thou shalt then, on apostolic, divine authority, become, through the promises of God, a "partaker of the Divine nature;" and to thee shall be administered abundantly an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

THE WORK OF LIFE: SOWING.

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NOTHING germinates like seed. Carved acorns are beautiful to the eye, but they produce no oaks. The sowing of the actual seed precedes the genuine harvest.

The pastor should lead in this work. It is a mistake, growing daily more common, that his duties lie overwhelmingly along the line of building up believers. Said a prominent worker in the Young Men's Christian Association: "My brother, it is your work to build us up; it is our work to win sinners to Christ." A great half-truth, surely.

It is true, however, that in a sense not yet realized church-members are sowers of the seed. *How can pastors secure the best results* for the Master and for souls, and *how can they induce the members of the churches to accomplish a like work?*

They should strive, first of all, after greater spiritual vitality on their own part. The semblance of fire will not warm; the semblance of life will not quicken. Henry Ward Beecher, the greatest actor on the American stage, is credited with saying substantially, "If you haven't the fire, hide your weakness; seem to glow!" A child will ultimately see through such a sham. So with the artificial emotion which sometimes passes for spiritual vitality, and so, largely, with rhapsody and electric enthusiasm, which are self-generated, self-evolved. One must have the actual Christ-force in order to be genuinely forceful.

Then comes self-giving. From every pore there should (and there will) stream forth real spiritual electricity, and the joy of it all will be that it comes from heaven. We should strive after the great verities and hold hard by them. Real God at one end of the line and real man at the other. *Nothing divine is alien to me*, consorts fitly with Thomas Arnold's quotation from a

loved author: "Nothing human is alien to me."

Then to the work! What work? Why, making men believe our message, and our conviction growing out of it. And the message? "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Luther's "little Bible," as he called it.

Reliance on the Spirit of God should not merely be taken for granted. The flint should be examined with every use of the gun. Otherwise how are we to rely on the fire? Then we should aim to hit. After thoughtful observation, the conviction has been reached that synthetic, not analytical, preaching is the more fruitful means in the conversion of souls. Analytical preaching is too likely to be introverted. Preachers of this type drift naturally into professorships. We find superlatively good men with a twofold endowment, like Brooks and Broadus, in pulpits and in institutions

of learning, but the analytical class furnishes the majority.

The gospel concave may be presented as grand as the firmament, but it is the gospel convex that penetrates. Taking hearers into the study of methods is good as far as it goes; but to move them with concrete truth,—that is the preacher's mission, and should be his passion.

Thus thinking, praying, working, we shall find God's Spirit before us in the work. Not one of us realizes our ideal, but the holy fire still burns on the Lord's altar. May lip and hand and life be inspired by it for the blessed work!

But the rank and file,—what about them? Are pastors and evangelists to monopolize the work? The church, for Christ's sake, exists for the benefit of the weak within it and without it. The members, therefore, are not to put forth the minimum of energy, but the maximum. Can we get the churches to realize this? The same specific work may not devolve upon

every one, but to each the proper work should be assigned. Just here the true pastor questions his own ability; but he must do his best. One thing we must do, —pray and labor that soul-saving become not a lost art in our churches. Shall we try special meetings? Yes, if either of two conditions exists,—viz., great deadness or a flow of life which overruns the usual channels. Almost anything is better than death, and every agency should be employed in the day of God's power. Ordinarily the interest should be concentrated in the regular services and the normal work of the members. A pastor, Lyman Beecher, when asked how it was that his charge showed such continuous vitality, replied, "The sermon which I preach to four hundred on Sunday is preached by four hundred throughout the week."

The spirit of expectation has a great deal to do with continued success. Who does not grow weary even in well-doing? "Oh, sir, I preach and preach, and no-

body is converted," said a young man to Spurgeon. "Do you expect somebody to be converted *every* time you preach?" said Spurgeon. "Oh, no." "Then that is just the reason why you fail." And the great London preacher did not greatly err. Let this idea enter the minds of Christian workers generally. The London Tabernacle bears witness to the grace of God and the power of God, because preacher and people are one in the great work. The proxy idea must go. The pastor is not employed like a hireling to do the people's work. He is called to lead them in a work which they must do, or suffer atrophy. "Work or die," hangs over the heads of churches and individuals alike.

Pastors can help each other in doing God's work, by conscientiously and discriminatingly building up the influence of brother pastors; not by shallow praise, but by a generous recognition of the good work God may have enabled each to do. Families with church letters have been

led to waver because they could not understand the attitude of rival pastors. "Outsiders" have been made to stumble. And yet a word or a look was all. In God's work there should be no waste of force. Churches can help each other. The Christian element in every city will see a work of grace, long desired, when Christ-like love beams in every eye and a Christ-like passion for souls glows in every heart.

THE LIVING WAY.

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EVERY age has had its seekers after God. Epictetus, Emerson, Tennyson, each in his own way felt the power of the soul's supreme magnet. What is universal in humanity is of chief significance in judging the race. Nevertheless, particulars weigh, inasmuch as every phase of civilization is resident in every community.

The slave, Epictetus, was the intellectual prince of his day, as he stoutly maintained the independence of the soul amid the limitations of the body, and the passion of the soul for seeking after God. England's poet-laureate goes a step further, as he pictures the great world's altar-stairs leading through darkness up to God. Midway between the two, Emerson moved like a twilight Viking seeking to peer through the mist in the effort to find out God. All had the true

heart of the mariner,—they only lacked the compass. Of them, as of the great Athenians, it may be said that they worshipped the "Unknown God."

The twilight and mist disappear when Christ emerges from the gloom, exclaiming, "I am the way"—to God. Not merely the way to heaven when you die, but the way to God now. "The Truth," too; and therefore the truth-lit way. "The Life," also; and therefore the living way. No man cometh unto the Father but by him.

When the Concord philosopher and poet most needed the intellectual faculties on which he had come to rely, they failed him. Just as he was about to launch out into the unknown future, he proved his decadence. His best friend, Longfellow, lay before him in the sleep of death, and he, as stated, could only whisper that the face was familiar, yet unknown.

When the greater Teacher felt the chill of Gethsemane and of Calvary creeping over him, his words grew more and more

luminous, for the light of eternity flashed through and through them: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you."—I would not trifle with the holiest sensibilities. —"I go to prepare a place for you." The sincerity of Jesus is the highest proof of a conscious immortality. He knew more than any other man; and, knowing more, he pledged his learning and his veracity, his knowledge and his sincerity, as the guarantee of the soul's future life.

The conception of life which the Gospel presents is very different from that which we have come to hold. It is qualitative rather than quantitative: "To know God" is life eternal. It penetrates the recesses of Eternity, if it lasts only a minute.* It is of the very essence of Eternity. True, it ministers to spiritual longevity. The cycles of the soul will be in keeping with its knowledge and its immortal growth;

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* Compare Drummond.

but the moral quality will always be dominant, while, of course, the time-element will have its place. A day of England matches a "cycle of Cathay;" and a day of heaven will match a cycle of this world.

A knowledge of the good and great expands the soul as mountain air expands the lungs. The more of it one breathes, the more of it one can continue to breathe. Life, not time, is the measurement of life. To know the best of the race is an education in itself. To know God is life everlasting.

The manner in which Christ solves the greatest of all problems is unique. He does not offer a system of philosophy, he merely states a fact: "I am the way," the living way. No hesitation weakens his affirmation; no doubt lurks in his words. The theoretical teacher tries to explain to a child what New York is like. The mother takes it in her arms and says, "Come, I'll take you there." That was

Christ's method. Better than that, while the mere friend is seeking to describe to the child the appearance of the father, who is about to return, the mother takes it in her arms and, with it, meets the father at the gate. Christ bears us in his arms to the Father. Glimpses he gives us now; the fuller view he will give us by and by. It is the delight of the Gospel to mix heaven and earth. Only superficial philosophy separates them. In the New Testament it is hard to draw the line of demarcation. Indeed, it cannot be drawn. The kingdom of heaven is always a unit with two sides, the earthly and the heavenly. While it is "not of this world" in spirit, it is always here, as well as there; now, as well as hereafter. Spiritual life, in like manner, is also a unit. Its beginnings may be like that of the brook. You can easily measure it at the source. Later it becomes a stream, a river. It blends with the gulf, the gulf with the ocean. Eternal life begins with the soul's knowledge of God. It

may widen and deepen; but increase in this knowledge precedes the ocean like vastness. In order to know God hereafter, we must know him here. Christ seizes this great fact and makes it the every-day fact of his ministry: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." The misunderstood Father was to be presented afresh to his children, so that they could not possibly fail to know him. Then life with them would begin, never to end.

We can imagine the look and tone of disappointment which characterized Christ when Philip said, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." "Have I, alas, been so long with you, Philip, in vain? For more than two years the burden of my ministry has been to disclose to you the Father in myself; and yet hast thou not known me? Behold, he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The son's face is

ofttimes better than the father's photograph. It was surely so with Christ.

From the first step to the last Truth lends its light, making bright the way, which in turn throbs with electric life for the feet which might otherwise grow weary. Vital knowledge becomes transformed into conscious life.

THE FINAL MANIFESTATION.

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All eyes were once turned towards Washington to see what kind of man the President would appoint to succeed a lamented Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court. The largest, noblest type was needed for a place so lofty. Why do the people hold the robe and ermine in such esteem? Because they stand for the highest and most exalted court of appeal in the land. But with all the dignity which attaches to it, what is it after all compared with the great tribunal before which the hearts of all men shall be bared! The day is coming when men will cease from deceiving their fellow-men. Thomas Carlyle saw, with his burning eyes, through many shams, but he offered little help to those whom he bewildered. A famous divine in an Eastern city was quietly asked if he was

a humbug. We wonder if he did not make answer with a tinge of sadness, since any man could ask another such a question, however invulnerable he may have been himself. In the white light of the judgment, deception will be unveiled. Few things in all the world are so dangerous as a sham. It shoots both ways, smiting deceiver and deceived alike.

But there are those who have deceived themselves. They, too, will be "made manifest" before the judgment-seat of Christ. They thought that they stood for God and the good, when, alas, they were standing all the while for themselves. They thought that the notes of pleasure to which they listened came from the skies, when, alas, they sprang from the ground. They thought the horizon of their life reached far towards the heavenly border, when, alas, it stopped at their very feet. All self-deception will have an end at the great assize.

In view of coming judgment, don't judge

others. How dare we do it? Their ways we may condemn, but how dare we pass judgment on the poor offenders, when we ourselves will soon be judged? Then says the apostle substantially: "Do not trip others up." It seems strange that the human heart should furnish room for the desire to make others stumble.

A man in ruins is an awful thing. No old castle can compare with him. Would you press the cup to the lips of a husband who stood trembling before you, hesitating whether to destroy his home or not? Oh, no; and yet some have done it. Put no stumbling-stone in the way of your brother. Be no stumbling-stone yourself. The Christian who causes others to "offend" should get out of the way. A marble slab may yield an angel of beauty to the artist, but if it lies in the way,—between a soul and the judgment-seat,—let it get out of the way. Is it snow that stops the train? "Shovel it away." Don't put on more steam. As has been said, it may only burst

the boiler. Clear the track and let the precious freight go forward.

Do not miss the meaning of the kingdom of God. It is not meat and drink, but "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The apostle could say, "With your eye on the judgment-seat, grasp righteousness first of all." "Christ's righteousness?" you ask. Yes; but Christ's righteousness, fitting like a garment of fire, till the soul casts off its carnal dross. To the great men, whose lives have blessed the world, life was like a robe of fire. Seek righteousness first, and out of that "peace" will grow; and out of peace "joy" will spring. But men reverse the order and seek joy first. Not so, advises Paul. With our nature purified, we may walk on life's lofty heights with God as Enoch did. These are lessons which all should think about who are not avowed believers.

Don't judge poor stumbling Christians. They are very weak, but blessed thought, they are the sons of God. A father clings

to his erring son. A mother keeps her arms around her crippled girl—so fondly. Does God do less? He loves his child with a father-like, God-like love, not because it is a good child, or a bad child, but because it is "his child." I cannot understand how some men consent to "hiss the church," even when they applaud the name of Christ to the echo. It is surely doing something. Help it to do more. Christ intends that it shall do more. Another thought: Do not trip a Christian when he tries to walk. There lurks in human nature, from boyhood up, a disposition to spread lines over which the passer-by may stumble. No harm meant, do you say? But harm is done. How vastly better to clear the way before believers that they may do their work! Many a "rough" has stood between a preacher and a mob simply because he favored fair play,—the Anglo-Saxon's maxim. If every man would help every other man, the world would be greatly better. When the hour

of judgment comes it will go hard with those who offend Christ's "little ones."

Do not miss the meaning of destiny. When you stand before the Judge you will be sent forward to fulfil the chosen logic of your life. How does the sinner live on earth? If he can answer that question he can decide just how he shall live hereafter. The miser will appear before the throne with his propensities retained and fixed, without the opportunity longer to gather and to hoard. The drunkard will come with his propensities fixed, the logical eternal expression of his own character. The rogue will come with tendency fixed forever, without the opportunity to steal. The heart corrupt and putrid will be left to its own base self. From all, God will strip the opportunity to re-enact their characteristic vice, but the trend of every character will be fixed; as in time so throughout all eternity.

May nothing of the Pharisee cling to any of us. You remember how he congratu-

lated himself on being better than his fellows; better than the poor publican. But while he was keenly offending God, the publican shook heaven with his prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

SOLIDARITY: A SOCIAL STUDY.

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THE waste of energy and the disintegration caused by extreme individualism make the appeal to unity the great social watch-word of the day. It goes to the heart of things. It brushes aside all superficial reforms based on liturgical or purely ecclesiastical movements, and presses to the precipice on which Christ stood appealing to the Father, with an infinite longing "that they all may be one!"

THE TWOFOLD PRINCIPLE.

This cry has in it the ring of a great principle, spiritual union with God, which is theocratic and union with each other, which is sociological. Back to God! must be the battle-cry in every movement to-

wards unity. The real divine headship is the pledge of solidarity. The choice of a man to be king turned the stream of human life in the wrong direction. Every great revolution has been the protest against this, and every true reformation has been a reaction towards divine headship. Both Carlyle and Mazzini would concede that these movements have been "national rather than broadly human," which fact has limited their influence. What is true of nations is true of individuals. While Christianity maintains the sanctity of the individual, it places a limit on individualism, by making responsibility the peer of liberty, and duties the peers of rights. Modern thought is leaning the other way. The atmosphere is charged with the "doctrine of rights." What was a natural feeling when martyrs were burning has become a cold, secularizing, disintegrating force, more or less constant. Indeed, it is to be questioned whether we have realized the apostolic conception of humanity, or

Christ's conception of the kingdom of God. While the Gospel is preached to the individual, and is accepted by the individual, there is an influence, floating over all, from which a mighty force proceeds,—namely, the solidarity of the kingdom,—too little kept in mind. Our work is piecemeal. It has to be that, we say. But it should be more than that. The public-school system is more than the aggregate of its schools in the land. It has become an ideal force. It approximates entirety, solidarity. The benevolent force of the day is more than the aggregate of agencies through which it expresses itself. It approximates solidarity. It has not yet marshalled all, but it is solidifying the best. There is a subtle force which is too largely eluding us in religious work. The defect is not merely in the lack of co-operation; it is also in the absence of a clear conviction that solidarity is needed to save us from the leakages produced by extreme individualism. Some Christian

bodies seek relief in human headship. The Ideal Christian Republic seeks a remedy in vital concentration around the divine centre, Christ. But vastly more than concentration is needed. Along with the movement of the units there must go the concentric force of the entirety. The family is more than the aggregate of individuals. It is that, of course; but it is also more than that. Some groups never become families at all. Everywhere the need is to associate with individuality its twin sister, solidarity. Individualism may suffer from the spirit of the times, because of combinations and trusts,—industrial and ecclesiastical; but its twin sister has everywhere suffered from the incoherency and the disintegrating tendencies of mankind, even the best of mankind. Christ's prayer is sure to be answered. It will burn its way to its answer; we should not stand in its way lest we be scorched. The men of the world pool their prejudices; the men of

the kingdom bury theirs, taking care that principles be not buried with them. We should get into line with that prayer, "That they all may be one," which directly solves the problem of religious life, and also solves the problem of man's brotherhood, in duties and in rights.

NOBLESSE OBLIGE: A SOCIAL STUDY.

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THAT is poor milk which sends no cream to the top; and yet a good many philosophers are like the Boston girl, who admired the far-away look in the eyes of the Jerseys on the farm, but preferred the blue milk of the city after all.

Nature is not built, and does not build, on the dead level plan. No system which ignores this fact is ideally or practically sound.

A genius for acquiring money is one of the factors in the world's progress. It is the genius for selfishly keeping or selfishly using it which proves hurtful. Men touch their hats to a Cambridge Peabody, but they take off their hats to the great philanthropist who linked the same name to a lasting benefaction. More of these, not fewer of them, we need. The capitalists

who built the Pacific railroads are not the people's enemies. For us there would be fewer next-door neighbors over the mountain were it not for the iron roadway. Large factories not only afford a living for hundreds of thousands, but they do more, they insure system and permanency, which the mixed leadership of masses would not be likely to do. A real head is vital to a real body. It is when the head receives an overplus of blood that the body suffers. Vital leadership is the great need of every age,—a leadership which recognizes that increase of privilege carries with it increase of obligation. A social philosophy which loses sight of this law, whether it be domiciled in college walls or planted on the sand-hills, will be misleading. The world finds it hard to learn that passion and logic must often go down before common sense. John C. Calhoun failed to learn this lesson from Webster, and the nation had to learn it over drawn swords. Agitators on both sides of the tariff question promise us an-

other serious diversion, blind to the fact that extremes are the refuge of less judicial minds.

It may be said, if leadership proves so disastrous, why stand for it? The answer is plain. Nature orders it. All men, well informed and well intentioned, are greater than one man; but there have been times when one man has shown himself greater than all other men. Leaving aside Cæsar in warfare, there were Galileo and Newton in science, Moses and Luther in theology. Without such leadership human history would be other than it is and less noble than it is. It is not redistribution of property that is needed, but a diffusion of its benefits. Time is wasted in fruitless criminations and recriminations, which might profitably be devoted to the formation of a public sentiment which is greater than existing law because it is its source.

If nature has endowed some men with extraordinary gifts, or granted exceptional advantages, they should consider the less

favored. Even if nobility of instinct does not lead them to pursue this course, they should remember that they may be with the vast majority again to-morrow. To the just the people will be generous; the unjust they will reach, hotly, through public sentiment, and coldly, through law. The jury system should be changed, and probably will be changed, so that one mercenary accident in the box will not be able to defeat justice and the popular will. Senators should be elected by the people, so as to make it more expensive and more difficult to secure the election of biased advocates; and the voters should be taught to see to it that they keep themselves alive to their dangers, their responsibilities, and their rights.

Great reforms are usually beneficent when they come as a slow growth; and mutual concession is the line along which economical and social questions adjust themselves; not in a cold-blooded spirit of compromise, so much as in a wise consciousness of the

fact that it takes two to make a compact as well as a contest.

We are now prepared to say to the exceptionally successful, *Noblesse oblige.* The greater the dignity the greater the duty. After all, moral training must do most of the work. Legal restraints should be carefully preserved and increased, as necessity demands, until human nature improves. But human nature will improve and does improve. They who teach the contrary hold the race back. They are very honest, and, therefore, all the more impervious. In the olden days the Whigs stoutly maintained that an opposing candidate for the vice-presidential nomination had placed a hundred-thousand-dollar-barrel subject to the order of his friends. Facilities for evil-doing have increased, but so have facilities for right-doing. One custodian of trust funds goes wrong, and the papers tell it at a thousand breakfast-tables. Not a word is said about the thousands who remain unobtrusively true. In all the world's history,

when were its pages enriched by so long a list of princely and persistent provisions for the lame, the halt, the blind? When did wise men give so much thought and time and money to the amelioration of the condition of the defenceless, the defective, the delinquent, the depraved? Many rich men are at the front. Ante-mortem and post-mortem endowments, involving millions of dollars, widen the sphere of educational eleemosynary activity every year,—money which could not otherwise have been so quickly and effectively concentrated on the points of supreme need. Then, too, the individual workers are beginning to share in the benefits of accumulated wealth; in better homes, better breathing-places, better education, provided very largely by voluntary or taxed wealth. Reservoirs sometimes precipitate destruction, but they are a recognized convenience under right conditions. Wise men are finding out that liberal dealing builds up one's assets in every way. It arouses the best impulses.

It has been known, again and again, to inspire men to live for one, to die for one. But it is its own best recompense; notwithstanding the fact that it bestows the patent of nobility. Itself makes that patent real, without the factitious aid of selfish exclusiveness.

Shall the aristocracy of letters be exempted while others are reviewed? Its capital is real; its members are parts of the social system. Have the people no claims upon them beyond the books for which they pay? The earnest man of letters is a boon to the race. If the practical genius keeps us from star-gazing, *he* keeps us from a grosser worship. But is the growing exclusiveness of literary men a healthful sign or a helpful factor in the world's elevation? The President of the United States is almost as accessible as some men whose simple touch refines. The world should be glad to have these benefactors weave the rarest fabrics in their beautiful homes overlooking the classic river or placid bay. But why

should human touch or interruption terrorize so many priests of literature, and lead them to withdraw their active personal sympathy from the world, except as it is paid for by the page? The exceptions are many and marked. We salute them.

Why should exclusiveness invade other spheres of activity, for instance, the ministry? It may not seem the thing for a pastor to be made a bureau of information in general and personal help in particular; as when a stranger asks him to place a lot in the hands of a real estate agent, the proceeds of sale to be forwarded as the *sine qua non* in completing a college course, and the like in an endless series. But why should not these things be? A vital young man, well planted, may be greater than a sermon. A good deed may be greater than a book. Individual rights end where exclusiveness cuts the wires, which lead to the great world's heart.

THE INTER-BIBLICAL PERIOD.

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It is pleasant to view Niagara Falls or the Rhine, even through the window of a flying car. As we sweep by scene after scene in the great period of the Jewish Restoration, some lasting impression may result, quickening our interest in the Jewish race, our Jewish Gospel, and our Jewish Redeemer. Keil in Germany, Davidson in Great Britain, and others have directed the attention of Bible students to the Inter-biblical Period, strongly emphasized by Dr. Broadus's review of Bissell's "Apocrypha." From German workers in this rich mine we may expect greatly more.

The importance of this period will be seen if we notice

I. ITS RELATION TO GENERAL HISTORY.

A wise student of history will not ignore great transition periods. Even chaos was

the cradle of creation. (1) The Middle Ages struck sparks of light from the flint of the Orient and the Occident, fanned the religious spirit to a flame, spread a crude gospel in the East, and enriched the West with the treasures of the Orient. That was a period of transition. (2) Ferdinand and Isabella were central figures in another; crystallizing their provinces into a grand Spanish kingdom, competent to grapple with hostile hosts at home and discover Americas abroad. That period was worthy of a Prescott's pen. (3) English history, under Henry VIII., marks the change from papacy to episcopacy in the English-speaking world. King Henry made Queen Bess a possibility. Conspicuously (4) the French Revolution gives the key to the history of modern France. That Revolution was not the creator, but the creature of principles and passions, whose rumblings might have been heard before the bursting of the great volcano. (5) Religious Germany, under Martin Luther,

affords the most striking analogy to the Inter-biblical Period. The spirit of unrest, the longing for purer and better things, the interplay of religious fervor and patriotic zeal,—these make the Christian Reformation and the Jewish Restoration closely akin.

II. ITS RELATION TO NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY

increases the importance of the Inter-biblical Period. It explains the origin of parties, places, principles. Itself the cradle of some, it was the nursery of many more. Dr. Broadus, in a noted *Review*, says:

"To neglect the inter-biblical history of the Jews is fatal to any thorough and vivid historical knowledge of the New Testament. Matthew and Luke take us at once *in medias res*. These beginnings of a new thing evidently take place amid an old civilization, and we cannot look around on the Roman or the Jewish world without looking back. If we turn simply to the

Old Testament it fails to explain much of what we encounter in the Gospels. Imagine a reader well acquainted with the Old Testament and its secular historical environment, who passes at once to a first examination of the Gospels. He will feel himself to be amid strangely new surroundings. Who is Herod, King of the Jews? Is he a descendant of David; and if not, how has he come to usurp the throne secured to David's line? Who is Cæsar Augustus, issuing a decree to all the world? We have seen Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian masters of Western Asia, claiming to reign over all the world, but who are these new rulers? Not a few things also require to be explained in the social and economical condition of the Jews as indicated in the New Testament. But there are numerous and wonderful changes also in their religious condition. Who are these Pharisees and Sadducees constantly coming before us, and evidently exerting so powerful an

influence on religious thought and life? What are the Rabbis, the lawyers, the Scribes? What are those synagogues, found in every town and frequented on every Sabbath, not for sacrifice and other ceremonial acts of worship, but for reading the law, religious discourse, and prayer? What high ruling body is this, called the Sanhedrim, a name having no Hebrew derivation, while the body is presided over by the high-priest? What is meant by the traditions of the elders? Whence came this wide-spread and firm belief in a resurrection of the dead, as to which the Old Testament gives but a few dim intimations? Such are some of the questions that must sorely perplex the reader we have imagined."

Let us glance at the political, literary, and religious history of this period.

I. THE POLITICAL INLOOK

is complex. (1) Eastern oppression comes first to view. The grasping hand of Baby-

lon had closed around Jerusalem, and then relaxed. Not, however, before Jerusalem's spirit had been crushed, her home made desolate, her children dragged away in chains, and her prophets' voices stilled in death.

Yea, not before her children had been taunted by heathen lips, and ordered to amuse heathen captors with the holy songs of Zion. "Sing us a song of Zion!" The very willows might well have wept while holding broken harps; sad symbols of broken hearts. Worse than all, Persia infused Persian thought into the strict, pure Hebrew teaching; and the sons and daughters of Jerusalem returned at length to Zion, with their spirit tinged and tainted by their Babylonian sojourn. That taint they never did efface. Still, whatever of good they gleaned in their captivity exerted a proportionate influence at home. God was preparing Israel for *Christian Thought.* A modified Hebrew tongue was to act its part in that work of preparation. So

Hebrew gave place to Aramaic, its Persianized offspring; the language of the people and, therefore, of Jesus, the "child of the people."

Once more at home, they are doomed to feel the force of (2) Macedonian oppression. Alexander the Great, having triumphed in the farther East, coveted Jerusalem, and hied him thither. But it was left for his creature, Antiochus Epiphanes, to grind the Jewish head beneath the Grecian heel, and profane the holy temple. But mark: the language of the Greeks (more gracious than their spirit) offered to take up and express, for the benefit of the world, religious thoughts for which the Aramaic was not fully competent. But was Israel idle? Did the Jews themselves offer no resistance to their enemies? They stood firmly; fought nobly; died grandly.

(3) Maccabean resistance was so sublime that this period is freely termed the Maccabean Period. Not quite two centuries before Christ, Matthias, after pouring out

his life-energies, cast his mantle on his worthy son, Judas Maccabeus, the Charles Martel, the Hammerer, of that earlier crusade. He was the third son, but the princeliest of them all. Piety and patriotism mingled equally in his heart, and flowed together in his very veins. Beth-Horon's battle-field and quiet Emmaus tossed the torch of victory to Capharsalama, which spread the flame; displaying the momentary glory of the great lost cause. Jonathan, the wary Simon and Hyrcanus, continued the conflict; but Judea was unfortunate, and the temple, though purified, was doomed. (4) Roman hands were to work the fell destruction. Invited to come as allies, they decided to stay as masters. They built the nest of the Herods and reared that viper brood. They gave a Pontius Pilate; they gave the shameful cross. They dismantled Jerusalem and dishonored the Holy Place. Their vandal hands swept away the temple and the people. But mark God's providence: these Romans,

as world-conquerors, spread the language of the Greeks, and that language was the casket of our written Testament. The religious Hebrew Phœnix that arose from the ashes of destruction, *Christian in its type*, followed the Roman cohorts to province after province; and, returning, made its nest triumphantly in Rome. Thus was queenly Rome employed to spread Hebrew-Christian thought, expressed in Greek, throughout the world.

2. THE LITERARY INLOOK.

Romantic, Philosophic, Historic. (1) Romantic, (*a*) Esdras, Book I., is supposed to have been written in Greek by a wandering Jew, outside of Palestine, two centuries B.C. This book restates the progress of the movement to restore the Jews to Jerusalem, under Cyrus and Darius. It is distinguished by the quaint literary contest which decided who should lead in the great Return. Three debaters appear

before the king with chosen topics. The first speaks on the power of wine, and delivers quite a temperance harangue. The second discusses the power of a king. The third takes up the power of woman, and astonishes the royal court by proving the power of woman superior to a king's. By a singular enlargement, the power of truth is presented by this same debater No. 3, and shown to be superior to the power of wine, king, and woman. As a reward of merit, the king crowns this third debater with the privilege of leading his people back to Zion. The hero was Zerubbabel. (*b*) Esdras, Book II., is conspicuous because containing New Testament phrases: "heavenly kingdom; immortal clothing, garments;" "Son of God;" "Christ." (*c*) Tobit may next be noticed. This book pictures Tobit as a blind father anxious about his son Tobias, who it seems craved death, because of matrimonial unhappiness. Tobias afterwards marries Sara, Raguel's daughter,

who had lost seven husbands through demon-influence, and contemplated suicide. Tobias marries her, and by using perfume and fish, he expels the demon power, and survives. The joy of Tobit brought back his sight.

[We should no more think of placing such a fantastic book in the sacred Canon than we should think of uniting the fairy fancies of Hans Christian Andersen and the profound and passionate utterances of a Luther. Still, Tobit is admired as a Jewish novel.]

(*d*) Judith, a tragedy, singularly fascinating. *Dramatis Personæ:* King Nebuchadnezzar's Captain-General Holofernes, Achior, Israel's peace-commissioner. Judith, a beautiful Jewish widow. Judith possessed the patriotic heroism of Deborah and Esther. She was unlike Joan of Arc, yet equally loyal to her people. Holofernes, the susceptible Captain-General, was threatening the land. Achior sought to secure peace for his people, but failed

utterly. Judith determined to try. Taking her maid with her, she suffers herself to be captured, and led before the mighty general. Holofernes instantly surrenders to her beauty, and displays uncommon leniency. Biding her time, she seizes the opportunity to decapitate the chieftain, spreading dismay throughout his camp, and firing the martial spirit of her Jewish countrymen. Having delivered her people, heroically, she returns toher home, and lives a courted widow, but the nation's bride.

[One thinks of the analogous feature in Miss Mühlbach's romantic "Joseph and his Court."]

We pass to the (2) Philosophic Writings: (*a*) The Wisdom of Solomon, so called, is a kind of later edition or imitation of Proverbs. It contains an interesting reference to the human origin of unrighteousness,—original sin. Chapter VII. gives "Twenty-one attributes of Wisdom." (*b*) The Wisdom of Jesus, Ecclesiasticus, contains crisp maxims, full of common sense,

bearing on life and wisdom: truisms, many of them. The beauty of queenly wisdom is displayed, and a Soliloquy flows evenly in Chapter XXIV. Inspiring, possibly, but not "inspired."

(3) The Historic (*a*) Maccabees, Book I., is of greatest value. This is the book that describes so graphically the brilliant career of Judas, the Maccabee, or Hammerer, and pictures the changing fortunes of the Maccabean princes. To this one book an article might be devoted, exhibiting a frantic effort of a dying people to win their freedom or a glorious death. (*b*) Maccabees, Book II., may not fairly be ranked with Book I., and yet the record of the pious family, whom scourge and whip could not force to violate the Jewish law in eating the flesh of swine, accords with the spirit of this heroic age. Furthermore, it is justly claimed that Josephus leaned heavily on these books, and is perfectly reliable only when copying, almost literally, their vigorous narratives.

Inquiry into the status of these books raises the

Question of the Canon.

The word "Canon" means "rule." Canonical books, therefore, are those which conform to the "rule." The noun, we learn, was first used A.D. 380, but the thing implied, viz., the regularity and authority of the books, was a recognized fact long before. The persecution of Antiochus is thought to have raised the question among the Jews, "For what writings shall we contend, and, if need be, die?" (1) The national decision was the formal expression of the existing national estimate, favoring the books which we call Canonical to-day. (2) The Alexandrian or Egyptian estimate varies; indicating a freer use of the Apocryphal writings, without making them equal with the "Law, Prophets, and Sacred writings." (3) Philo and Josephus may be similarly classed. (4) New Testament teachers (Christ and the Disciples) quote only from

the "Canonical" books; and quote from every one of these "except Judges, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Esther, Ezra, and Nehemiah." (5) The Protestant world may be said to follow substantially the New Testament example.

We have thus reviewed hastily the political and literary features of the Inter-biblical Period.

Of special moment is

3. THE RELIGIOUS INLOOK.

The Mighty Conflicts

between Jewish Monotheism and Gentile Polytheism. (1) Persian influence was great. It affected the language and thought of the people; and very naturally their religious life showed evidence of foreign engraftings. Of this we have already spoken. So also of (2) Greek conquest and culture, and (3) Roman aggression, destruction, and dissemination. This trinity of culture, Persian, Greek, and Roman, threatened the

overthrow of the simple culture of the Hebrews. What were the

Potential Helps

in waging this mighty conflict? (1) The loyal masses. The half-religious, half-patriotic passion of the people seemed literally inextinguishable. (2) The Pharisees, or Separatists, made themselves felt. As the grand champions of immortality and Messianic truth, the beginning of their history should not be buried in their hypocritical after-history. Fair fountains may become impure. (3) The Essenes, ascetics of the deserts, contributed to the national feeling and strength. (4) The Rabbis of whatever sect, whether Pharisees, believing in immortality, or Sadducees, denying that doctrine, exerted almost unbounded influence. Of one it was claimed that he understood the language of birds and trees. Of another it was said that his piercing eye could bring down birds in their lofty flight. Exaggerations? Yes, but they show the

extent of rabbinical influence. (5) The Sanhedrim, or Session (patterned after Moses's seventy elders), itself a child of the Maccabean Revival, helped to bind the people by judicial influence. (6) Political Hierarchs of Jewish choice were so powerful that their conquerors sometimes deposed the national High-Priest; for example, Annas, and appointed a minion of their own, Caiaphas. This explains why our Lord was taken before the two. Annas, though deposed, retained great influence over the Jews; the other possessed authority from Rome. (7) Synagogues were extraordinarily powerful in developing the religious and national feeling of the people.

Scattered over the country, they served as primary temple-schools. The Quahal, of the prophetic day, was the model of Ezra's great congregation; and from this tree of Ezra's planting grew the scions which were destined to be engrafted as synagogues, in Galilee as well as in Judea. In Asia Minor also; for Paul's voice was

heard by crowds who thronged the synagogue at Iconium.

Above all other helps stood God. He was the supreme stay of the people in this period. Jealous of his truth, jealous of his people, he interposed until, by their own unrighteousness, they forfeited his protection and deliverance. Then it was that the necessity for the new *kingdom of heaven* made itself manifest. John the Baptist was the herald of this divine kingdom; *Christ* was the Great Head.

Such, in conclusion, were the genius and spirit of the day in which Christ appeared. We can almost see the Jewish lad retiring to some hill about Nazareth to commune with nature's God, with nature herself, and to study the law and the prophets; and influences born of the traditions of the people entered his great heart to be purified in sacred fire. His supreme guiding light was his Father's glory; his supreme motive was to do his Father's will; his supreme passion to conquer the world for

that Father, and bring all the creatures of his kingdom into union and communion with God, its King.

That is the Christ whom we cherish to-day.

THE END.

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